

The Tumbleweed

January 2018

EDEN PRAIRIE  UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

BIG
ENOUGH TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE
SMALL
ENOUGH TO
CARE



As a Reconciling
Congregation, we accept
and respond to Jesus'
challenge to love all of our
neighbors.

Eden Prairie UMC
15050 Scenic Heights Road
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Tel: (952) 937-8781
www.prairiechurch.org

Annual Meeting Jan. 21

A new year at Eden Prairie UMC begins Jan. 21, as we learn about the vision for 2018. Last year, we explored the work of the Holy Spirit as wind, blowing us to new places and people. Please turn the page to learn more about the 2018 theme that uses "seeing" as a focus. Details are in Pastor Dan's column on page 3.

After worship, we'll eat a potluck meal together and have a short meeting (Charge Conference) to elect 2018 leaders and receive and approve a membership report. Find your potluck assignment below:



The potluck assignments

The first letter of your last name tells you what to share at the potluck:

A-F – Please bring a dessert

G-M – Please bring a salad

N-Z – Please bring a main dish/casserole

A new food ministry at Eden Prairie UMC

Students who receive free or reduced price lunches often go hungry on the weekends or during school holidays. This is true at Oak Point Elementary in Eden Prairie, as well as other schools including Forest Hills and Eden Lake Elementary schools within the Eden Prairie school district.

Fortunately, there is a way to provide weekend meals for these students through The Sheridan Story. You will hear more about a partnership between Eden Prairie UMC and The Sheridan story in the coming weeks and ways that you can help provide food on weekends to students.

In collaboration with churches and community organizations, The Sheridan Story provides weekend meal packs to students in need. You can read about the nonprofit on its website, www.thesheridanstory.org. It was begun in 2010, when school administrators at Sheridan Elementary School in Minneapolis noticed that students hoarded food on Fridays to take home.

Sheridan Story, to page 5

From the Pastor

We spent 2017 “**Opening ourselves to the Holy Spirit.**” We defined this action as claiming that intuitive sense of God’s presence that shapes and forms us. We explored through the image of the wind how the Holy Spirit blows where it will and takes us to people and places and needs we never dreamed of pursuing.

And then a few months ago, I showed this graphic in worship and asked if you could see the arrow.



A few of us saw it, just in between the E and the X at the end. Do you see it, now? In the design world, this is called negative space. In my world, I call it amazing. Now I see the arrow on the side of every FedEx truck and package and ad.

This graphic opened my eyes to a new way of explaining and exploring our faith. What if, as we remain opened to the Holy Spirit, we also began to see more readily or clearly the hidden-in-plain-sight parts of life that reveal God’s presence? It’s a very intriguing thought for me. So much so that “Where did you see the arrow this week?” is the question we now use to start our staff meetings.

This year I want to invite you to see the reality of God, the hope God has in us and in places that are often hidden or overlooked. To do this, we will continue to be open to the Holy Spirit. We’ll also need to start seeing our lives and our world differently. In 2018 our worship theme will be

GOD’S LIGHT: SEEING IN A NEW WAY

In the Bible this thought of “God Signs” being hidden in plain sight occurs most often in the Gospel of John. The Gospel of John uses the images of Light and Seeing to help us to claim Jesus as the Light of the World.

At our Annual Meeting, which includes worship on January 21, I’ll have a lot more to say about where we are headed. I hope you can attend. If you cannot attend, please take the time to listen to that sermon on our website. This year I want to invite you... I mean U EPUMC, to see God’s light. Can you see the hope God has in “U?”

Keep the Faith,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Dan".



January Worship Schedule

January 7 “Following Stars”

Worship Text: Matthew 2:1-12

Our Worship will include Holy Communion and a reaffirmation of our vows of membership. Music by the Praise Team.

January 14 “Following a Voice”

Worship Text: Mark 1:9-11

Our worship will include the reaffirmation of baptismal vows. Music by the Chancel Choir.

2018 Theme: GOD’S LIGHT: SEEING IN A NEW WAY

In 2018, our worship focus will be “**God’s Light: Seeing in a New Way.**” Where does it shine? How does our experience of faith inform how we see the world? To do this, we will need to continue to be open the Holy Spirit. We’ll also need to start seeing our lives differently. Our new theme is introduced Jan. 21 in worship before our Annual Meeting.

SEEING GOD’S LIGHT

January 21 Annual Meeting “Following God’s Light”

Worship Text: John 1:1-4, John 3:1-18 ... Nick at Night

Communion Sunday

Music by the Chancel Choir

We begin to explore what it means to see our lives and the world in God’s light. We will review the past year of being “Open to the Holy Spirit” as a catalyst to 2018 at EPUMC. This year I want to invite you, I mean U EPUMC, to see the reality of God, the hope that God has in us and the world, in places that are often hidden or overlooked.

January 28 “The Dreams We Long to See”

Text: Revelation 21:1- 5a, Exodus 33:12-23

God’s Glory is revealed in this odd story from this obscure book of the Bible. God’s light shines as a new reality. In Revelation the writer paints a picture that a hopeful Jewish Christian would understand almost without having to think about it. What are the dreams you long to see?

MUSIC NOTES

Thank You to All of Our Musicians!

As 2018 begins, I want to say “Thank You” to all of our very talented and giving musicians who helped make 2017 at Eden Prairie United Methodist Church an exciting place to worship and praise God for all that we have been given!

The Chancel Choir began rehearsals in September and provided us with an absolutely stunning Advent Cantata Dec. 10. Our 30-voice choir and 18-piece orchestra helped to remind everyone who attended of the blessed gift given for all – Jesus Christ.

The Handbell Choir also started in September and provided wonderful service music throughout the year. They work hard, have fun and enjoy sharing their gift of music through handbells.

And how could I forget the Praise Team?! The Praise Team singers and musicians rehearsed throughout the entire year to bring their fun and enthusiastic energy to worship and especially with the Praise Team Trio – Tim Case on piano, JoAnne Hillyer on bass guitar and Craig D’Alessio on drums.

Without the support and the giving of their time and talents to these groups, the music at EPUMC would not be at the high level that it is. I am proud and blessed to lead and help guide our Music Ministries. 2018 promises to be another banner year here at EPUMC as we continue to build on our new energy and excitement both in worship and in all that is happening here!

Don Prestly – Director of Worship and Music

Weather Closure Guidelines

Winter can bring severe and dangerous weather conditions when travel is not advised. Events and meetings at Eden Prairie UMC will be cancelled if the Eden Prairie School District cancels classes or afterschool or evening activities. We greatly appreciate the work of weekend snow servants, who are ready to clear the walks should it snow Saturday or Sunday.

Parking Lot overflow

Winter weather can also impact parking. Please know that if streets have been plowed, you can park on the street. The business lot immediately east of the church is also available as overflow parking.

Year-end financial reminders

IRS rules state contributions must be post-marked Dec. 30 or hand-delivered by Dec. 31 to qualify as 2017 contributions. The church office is open Friday, Dec. 29, 8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m., and will be open Sunday, Dec. 31, for worship.

If you want to make automatic contributions to Eden Prairie UMC, you must fill out an authorization form **EACH YEAR**. Forms are available at the welcome desk or in the church office.

If you haven’t turned in a 2018 pledge, please do so today! Thank you for supporting the ministry of EPUMC.

Church News and Events

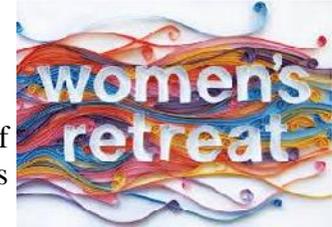
Register Jan. 7 for retreat

Women's Retreat, Jan. 26-28, 2018

It's NOT too late to sign up and join us for a wonderful weekend away to relax, build relationships, and nurture your faith! We have a great group of women already signed up. To register, come to our table Sunday, Jan. 7, in the Fellowship Hall. You can also register through the church website, www.prairiechurch.org, click on fellowship tab and then the women's retreat tab, or contact Deb Soderholm, debs@prairiechurch.org. You will come home refreshed and centered, with

new friendships and connections. We have room for YOU! Reminder: The cost of this great weekend is only \$155, which includes four

delicious meals, comfortable **private** rooms (two nights) and the use of the entire facility for just our group. If you are unable to join us, please keep us in prayer over the weekend. Thank you.



Troop 342 celebrates 100th Eagle Scout

Troop 342, chartered by Eden Prairie UMC, invites members and their families to celebrate the achievement of the Troop's 100th Eagle Scout.

An Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony is planned for Thursday, Jan. 4, at 7 p.m. Three Boy Scouts from the Troop (Luke Johnson, Matthew Meyers and Brandon Deem) will receive their Eagle Rank. One of them is the 100th! Refreshments will be served after the program. All are welcome to attend.

Official Notice

Charge Conference will be Jan. 21

Eden Prairie will have a Charge Conference Sunday, Jan. 21, following worship to elect new lay leadership for 2018 and review and approve membership records. Members of Eden Prairie UMC may vote, and everyone is invited to attend.

Condolences to the Lundeen family

Our sympathy to Kirk Lundeen following the death of his mother, Betty, Dec. 22, in a traffic accident. His father Dar was seriously injured at the same time.

Sheridan Story, from Page 1

The staff approached Mill City Church, which met at the school, to see how they might help. Mill City joined with Woodridge Church to launch the Sheridan Story by providing weekend meals for kindergarten students.

By 2013 The Sheridan Story saw the need to develop a larger growth strategy and what emerged is their network model of weekend food programs. Incorporated as a separate non-profit organization, it launched pilot programs in three more Minneapolis schools, reaching a total of 500 children in five schools. The pilot programs were successful, and The Sheridan Story has seen incredible growth in their impact on child hunger in the Twin Cities. Due to strong school and community partnerships, The Sheridan Story now serves more than **5,400 students in 144 schools**. Food insecurity is a problem throughout the state; more than 200,000 children in Minnesota live in food insecurity.

Tuesday Book Club resumes

Our discussion of *Almost Nearly Perfect People: Behind the Myth of the Scandinavian Utopia* resumes Jan. 9, 2018, 6 p.m. For information contact Ray Soderholm at rsoderholm@yahoo.com.

Children's Ministries

Sunday School at year's end

We are having another wonderful year in Sunday School—paralleling Pastor Dan's sermon series—through hands-on curriculum experiences. Our numbers continue to be good. This year we have six classes—preschool, K-1st, 2nd, 3-4th, 5-6th, and 7th-8th. Our class leaders and shepherds are amazing—leading our children on a journey of faith and life experiences, with love at the center. It is an exciting time to be a part of this ministry here, and I look forward to exploring and creating curriculum for our new theme for 2018.



CONNECT CLUB (3rd-4th Graders)

We have nine wonderful children in our Club this year and they are enthusiastic, lively and fun! We met on Dec. 6 to decorate our rooms and make treats to share with others. On Dec. 20, I shared a story called, "The Birds," which is about a man who did not believe in God. On a snowy Christmas Eve, he found a flock of birds by his barn. He tried several different ways to encourage them to enter the barn to be safe from the storm, but without success. He thought to himself, "If only I could become a bird, I could tell them I care about them and want to help them." Just then, he heard the church bell ringing in the village. He dropped to his knees, realizing that THIS was why God sent Jesus to us, "to help us to know how much we are loved and how we can share that love with others."

This is the gift we receive each Christmas—God's love come to earth in the form of a baby who changed the world.

After our story we played several games, including one where each person had to use a regular-sized candy cane to pick up small candy canes (no hands!). See the picture below at left. To end our time together, the children opened their stockings. They are such a blessing to me. —

Deb Soderholm



Church News

Farewell from Miss Elisha

Time flies when you're having fun! It's hard to believe that it's been 10 years since I began my service as child care provider to the children of the members of this congregation. What a joy it's been getting to know the children from a very young age and watching them grow up, and eventually leave the day care and move on to other things. It's still fun to watch them walk through the halls of the church all grown up. (You know, they think they are all grown up at 10!)

It has also been a pleasure getting to know the parents and other members of the congregation, especially those who have been there as volunteers in the day care. I cannot thank you all enough for being so welcoming and

caring, and for entrusting me with the care of you precious children all these years.

It's been 15 years since I left Trinidad for Minneapolis. Back then, I said I would give it two years, and see how it goes. Ten years ago, we drove 30 minutes from home for a job interview at the Church. When I accepted the position, I said I would see how it goes.

Now, it's off to a new adventure, back to Trinidad to be with family, especially with my grandchildren. The time will fly! Before I know it, they will be grown up. It will be fun!

I wish you all a Happy Holiday Season.
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
– **Miss Elisha**



Advent Celebration report

We had more than 90 people (including several new families) join us Dec. 3 for an evening to celebrate and prepare for Advent. Our theme of “Christmas Around the World” made for some fun and interesting activities, including weaving straw, stamping cards, mixing spices for a dip mix and many more.

From crafts, we moved into the sanctuary to see the play, “Hark, from the Herald.” It was a delightful story of a reporter named Hark (back in Bethlehem) who was looking for a true human-interest story to write, and he found it in the birth of a baby named Jesus. It was wonderful!

Then it was time to eat. There was plenty of pizza, salad, drinks and ice cream for everyone and lots of talking and sharing. It was an amazing event! Thanks to all who helped and participated.

Room Renovation Update

Our room projects are coming along! Our TWO nurseries upstairs are being painted now and will soon be good to move in furniture and children. Our preschool room downstairs is being used for class, although there are several smaller projects that still need to be finished there. Things are looking fantastic, thanks to several great people who have given their time and talents to doing demolition, moving items, laying flooring, and PAINTING. We could not have accomplished all of this without these great people:

Higher Grounds – Senior High Youth

Matt Brogan
Tory Brogan
Rachel Casper
Steve Caudill
Darren Conlee
Jack Elkin
Spencer Hagen
Peggy Ingber
Nick Kremer
Fordjour Kyei

Chris Lotzow
Michael Lotzow
Mike Mills
Luke Olson
Bart Reed
Linda Rorke
Jeremy Simonson
Dave Soukup
Jeff Veatch
Bob Wagner

Youth News and Updates

by Terri Myers

We are looking forward to 2018 as a year of service and engagement in our youth programs! We will resume our Youth Programming Wednesday, Jan. 10 (Wednesday Nights from 7:00-8:00 pm).

Higher Grounds will serve at Simpson Wednesday, Jan. 17. If your family is interested in serving and/or providing food (we will need salads, milk, bread as well as main dishes), please contact Terri at terrim@prairiechurch.org.

This year our Youth Mission Group will be going to South Dakota (June 23-29, 2018). We have reservations for 20 youth. If you are in 8th – 12th grade and are interested in joining us, please contact Terri before Monday, Jan. 15.



Thank you

Dear Friends:

Thank you. Together we do heartfelt work. As I reflect on this year, together we have accomplished so many things for so many people. Your November donation of 117 pounds of food continues the great work of helping people in need.

Together we helped our hungry neighbors not just have a meal, but be able to choose healthy, fresh produce every week. Thanks to your support of PROP's new backyard garden, the support of eight community gardens, and the expanded grocery food rescue program, better nutrition is now possible for all who come to the food shelf.

Together we expanded delivery to our low-income homebound seniors, helping the most vulnerable in our community.

Together we kept over 80 families safely housed by avoiding eviction. By keeping families stable, they can keep their vital networks of schools, faith-based organizations and other neighborhood support.

With community support, we expanded our car repair program so that households can

continue to get and keep jobs, go to doctor appointments and transport their kids to and from school activities.

Thank you for caring for your neighbors in need and believing in PROP. Your support has meant over 1,000 families in our community face a better future.

As we continue to face the challenges of lack of affordable housing, the widening gap between wages and the cost of living, physical and mental health issues and skyrocketing medical costs, I know that together we're going to do amazing things in 2018. PROP is as strong as the community that supports it.

Warm regards, **Janet Palmer, executive director**



Happy
New Year!

January 2018



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| | 1 New Year's Day Church Office closed. | 2 5:45pm Daisy Scouts | 3 8am Men's Discussion Group 10am Staff Meeting No Wednesday Night activities | 4 8:45am Yoga 10am Women's Faith Share 7pm Eagle Scout Court of Honor | 5 | 6 8am Cheers & Cheers, Too @ Kowalski's |
| 7 8:30am Adult Forum 10am Worship/Holy Communion/ Sunday School, Pre-K—4th 11am Coffee & Fellowship Faith Vietnamese Fellowship | 8 7pm Cub Scouts Boy Scouts InterKnits 7pm Women's In-Home Book Group @ home of Deb Wagner | 9 6pm Tuesday Book Group | 10 8am Men's Discussion Group 10am Staff Meeting 6pm Huddle 6:30pm Children's Choir 7pm Connect Club, BLT & Higher Grounds 7pm Chancel Choir | 11 8:45am Yoga 10am Women's Faith Share 6pm Daisy Scouts 7pm Handbell Choir | 12 | 13 8am Cheers & Cheers, Too @ Kowalski's |
| 14 8:30am Adult Forum 10am Worship/ Sunday School, Pre-K—8th grade 11am Coffee & Fellowship Faith Vietnamese Fellowship | 15 Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Observance Church office closed. 6pm Feed My Starving Children, Chanhassen- | 16 5:45pm Daisy Scouts 6:30pm Trustees 7pm SPRC | 17 8am Men's Discussion Group 9am Perkins Breakfast Group 10:30am Staff Meeting 5:15 Simpson Supper team leaves (Higher Grounds) 6pm Huddle 6:30pm Children's Choir 7pm BLT 7pm Chancel Choir | 18 8:45am Yoga 10am Women's Faith Share Pinewood Derby weigh-in | 19 | 20 8am Cheers & Cheers, Too @ Kowalski's 10am MS Support Group 1-5pm Pinewood Derby 7to9 Dinner Group |
| 21 Annual Meeting 8:30am Adult Forum 10am Worship/Holy Communion/ Sunday School, Pre-K—6th 11am Potluck Meal, followed by Annual Meeting Faith Vietnamese 6:45pm YMSL | 22 | 23 6pm Tuesday Book Group | 24 8am Men's Discussion Group 10am Staff Meeting 6pm Huddle 6:30pm Children's Choir 7pm Connect Club, BLT & Higher Grounds 7pm Chancel Choir | 25 8:45am Yoga 10am Women's Faith Share 7pm Handbell Choir | 26 7pm <i>Women's Retreat begins</i> | 27 8am Cheers & Cheers, Too @ Kowalski's <i>Women's Retreat</i> |
| 28 8:30am Adult Forum 10am Worship/Sunday School, Pre-K—8th 11am Coffee & Fellowship 11:30am Women's Retreat ends Faith Vietnamese Fellowship | 29 | 30 | 31 8am Men's Discussion Group 10am Staff Meeting 6pm Huddle 6:30pm Children's Choir 7pm BLT & Higher Grounds 7pm Chancel Choir | | | |

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ACTION

Partnering with Simpson Housing Services

Eden Prairie serves an evening meal at Simpson Shelter about six times a year. Each meal requires 10 people to serve and clean up, and 16 people to provide a main dish. The next serving date is Jan. 17, 2018; EPUMC Youth will help prepare and serve.



2018 Simpson Serving Dates

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Wednesday, January 17 (Youth event) | Wednesday, June 27 |
| Thursday, February 22 | Thursday, September 20 |
| Thursday, May 24 | Thursday, October 25 |

'Share the Warmth'

Winter brings many challenges for those who are homeless, and staying warm is a big one. Eden Prairie UMC is collecting NEW mittens and gloves, hats, scarves, long underwear and socks, as well as new and gently used blankets and bedding through Jan. 15. The youth will bring the items to the shelter when they serve the evening meal. Please — NO coats or jackets; Simpson Shelter has no storage space for these items. If any are donated, they will be given to PROP.



Feeding hungry children around the world

At Feed My Starving Children, we package meals for shipment to the hungry world-wide! The next service date is Jan. 15 at 6 p.m. at the Chanhassen location, 18732 Lake Drive E., Chanhassen. If you wish to attend, sign the clipboard on the Social Action bulletin board or check the commitment section.



Requested Food Items for January

Eden Prairie UMC is asked to provide some different items for the food shelf this month:

- Jam/jelly**
- Syrup**
- Vegetable soup**
- Canned chili**
- Shampoo/conditioner**

Thank You

The Social Action Ministry Team sends a big thank you and Merry Christmas to everyone who participated in our PROP Sharing Tree project. Your generosity provided gifts for 60 children and 20 seniors in our community.

Adult Small Groups

There is always something happening here at EPUMC! Here are some of the great opportunities we offer for fun, fellowship and so much more! If you'd like more information about any of these groups, please contact the church office and we'll put you in touch with the appropriate person.

Men's Discussion Group meets Wednesdays from 8—9 a.m. in the Gathering Room.

Women's Evening In Home Book Group meets about every other month. The next meeting will be Monday, Jan. 8, 2018, 7 p.m. at Deb Wagner's home. The book is ***Small Great Things*** by Jodi Picoult.

Feed My Starving Children

Our next packing date is **Monday, Jan. 15**, 6 p.m., at Feed My Starving Children, 18738 Lake Drive E., Chanhassen.



Simpson Shelter — Help serve a meal or provide food or money. Watch for additional ways to support shelter guests.

Cheers (Men's Fellowship Group) meets Saturdays at 8 a.m. located at Kowalski's Market (16500 W 78th Street).



Cheers Too! (Women's Fellowship Group) Meets Saturdays at 8 a.m. at Kowalski's Market (16500 W. 78th Street). Come and join us!

Perkins Breakfast Group meets the third Wednesday of each month at the Chanhassen Perkins Restaurant (located just off of Highway 5 at Powers Blvd.) from 9-10:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome.

7 to 9 Dinner Group is a small group that gathers for a meal at a home. The next date is January 20. Contact Kathy Jarvis at Kathy-Jarvis@comcast.net or Nancy Bollweg at Nancy.Bollweg@yahoo.com for details.



Yoga meets Thursdays at 8:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Terri Myers leads this group, and it is free. Please check the weekly schedule.

Prayer Network — Praying for the church family's concerns and joys on a daily basis. Please contact the church office at office@prairiechurch.org or 952-937-8781 to be included in the Network or if you have a prayer request.



Women's Faith Share meets Thursdays from 10–11:30 a.m., September through May 2018, in the Gathering Room. All women are welcome.

GEMS — (Adults over 55) Meets for faith and fellowship events.

MOMS Group — This group meets regularly for fellowship and support.

United Methodist Women meets on selected dates during the month. Please contact Ginger Eddy at 952-974-2092 or vfellingner@gmail.com for more information.

Inter-Knits Prayer Shawl Ministry generally meets the second Monday of the month at the church at 7 p.m. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Sherry Harms at 952-935-1505. We meet in Room 6.

BLINK—A group for parents of children pre-K through 6th grade that meets monthly for family-oriented activities. Contact Sarah Bosch at EPUMCBLINK@gmail.com.



Eden Prairie United Methodist Church
15050 Scenic Heights Road
Eden Prairie, MN 55344



| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Pastor: | Dan Schneider-Bryan | danb@prairiechurch.org |
| Director of Children's Ministries: | Deb Soderholm | debs@prairiechurch.org |
| Young Family Engagement Specialist: | Jody Veatch | jodyv@prairiechurch.org |
| Director of Worship and Music: | Don Prestly | donp@prairiechurch.org |
| Director of Youth Ministry: | Terri Myers | terrim@prairiechurch.org |
| Organist/Accompanist: | Tim Case | |
| Office Manager: | Becky Coleman | beckyc@prairiechurch.org |
| Accountant: | Susie Jose | book-keeping@prairiechurch.org |
| Custodian/Building Manager: | Rick LaMothe | rickl@prairiechurch.org |

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Church office hours:

8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. Monday and Thursday
8:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.



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